

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4613

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

CINCPAC

CINCPACREPPHIL

13TH AIR FORCE CLARK AB RP

S E C R E T MANILA 6062

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJECT: SINGAPORE A-4 TRAINING IN THE PHILIPPINES

REF: STATE 99293

BEGIN SUMMARY: RSAF SURVEY TEAM VISITED PHILIPPINES
APRIL 25 - MAY 1 TO DISCUSS SINGAPORE A-4 (AND POSSIBLY
HUNTER) TRAINING NEEDS WITH GOP AND US MILITARY AND TO
INSPECT CUBI NAVAL AIR STATION AND CLARK AIR BASE AS
POSSIBLE TRAINING SITES. PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE REPRESENTED
GOP IN TALKS AND RECOMMENDED CLARK AS MOST APPROPRIATE SITE.
RSAF/AGREED THAT CLARK WOULD BE ITS FIRST CHOICE BUT SAID
THAT CUBI WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE FALLBACK. PROBLEM AROSE
WHEN PAF SAID RSAF COULD NOT RPT NOT CONDUCT LOW-LEVEL
NAVIGATIONAL TRAINING OUTSIDE OF CLARK RESERVATION. RSAF

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TEAM SAID THAT IF THIS RESTRICTION WERE IMPOSED, TEAM WOULD

RECOMMEND TO GOS THAT A-4 TRAINING FACILITY NOT RPT NOTE BE ESTABLISHED IN PHILIPPINES. RSAF TEAM RETURNED TO SINGAPORE MAY 1 TO DISCUSS WITH GOS AUTHORITIES WHETHER, IN LIGHT OF GOP RESTRICTION ON NAVIGATIONAL TRAINING, TO DEVELOP FORMAL TRAINING PROPOSAL FOR PRESENTATION TO USG AND GOP. IF PROPOSAL IS PRESENTED, RSAF TEAM SAID THAT SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE REQUIRED WITH USG AND GOP 1) TO WORK OUT PHYSICAL DETAILS OF PROJECT AND 2) TO DEVELOP APPROPRIATE STATUS OF FORCES ARRANGEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. RSAF SURVEY TEAM LED BY AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE OFFICER (WING COMMANDER TURNBULL) VISITED PHILIPPINES APRIL 25 - MAY 1 TO DISCUSS WITH GOP AND US MILITARY RSAF A-4 (AND POSSIBLY HUNTER) TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND TO INSPECT CLARK AIR FORCE BASE AND CUBI NAVAL AIR STATION AS POSSIBLE TRAINING SITES.

2. RSAF TEAM DESCRIBED ITS OPTIMUM TRAINING PLANS IN FOLLOWING TERMS:

A) DEPLOY TO CLARK OR CUBI (PREFERABLY CLARK) 8 A-4S ABOUT FOUR TIMES A YEAR FOR TRAINING CYCLES OF SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS EACH. TRAINING WOULD BE IN (1) BOMBING AND GUNNERY AND (2) LOW-LEVEL NAVIAGION. FIRST DEPLOYMENT COULD BE AS EARLY AS OCTOBER 1976;

B) POSSIBLY RPT POSSIBLY DEPLOY TO CLARK OR CUBI (PREFERABLY CLARK) A SMALL NUMBER OF BRITISH-MADE HUNTER AIRCRAFT TWICE A YEAR FOR THE SAME TRAINING PROVIDED THE A-4S. (PLANNING FOR HUNTER TRAINING APPEARS UNFOCUSED AND TENTATIVE AT THIS TIME.);

C) DEPLOY WITH EACH CYCLE OF A-4 AIRCRAFT 15 RSAF OFFICERS (9 PILOTS) AND 60 - 80 RSAF NCOS AND ENLISTED MEN. (HUNTER DEPLOYMENT WOULD BE LESS.) ALL WOULD BE SINGAPOREAN CITIZENS. THERE WOULD BE NOT RPT NOT DEPENDENTS. NO RPT NO AIRCRAFT OR PERSONNEL WOULD REMAIN IN THE PHILIPPINES BETWEEN TRAINING CYCLES. SOME LIMITED QUANTITIES OF RSAF EQUIPMENT WOULD BE LEFT IN STORAGE.;

D) CONDUCT DURING EACH TRAINING CYCLE ABOUT 350 HOURS OF AIR TRAINING WHICH WOULD BREAK DOWN TO ABOUT 12 SORTIES PER DAY, FIVE DAYS A WEEK. THERE WOULD BE FEW, IF ANY, NIGHT OPERATIONS. (HUNTER SORTIE RATE HAS NOT YET BEEN

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DETERMINED.);

D) ACQUIRE USE OF RAMP SPACE FOR UP TO 8 AIRCRAFT AND QUARTERS FOR UP TO 95 PERSONNEL. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS WOULD INCLUDE (1) 2,000 SQUARE FEET FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATIONS COMPLEX, (2) 2,000 SQ. FT. FOR COVERED STORAGE, AND (3) 2,400 SQ FT. FOR TWO HANGARS.

3. GOS WOULD FULLY REIMBURSE USG AND GOP, AS APPROPRIATE,

FOR ALL SERVICES, SUPPORT AND OTHER COSTS RELATED TO THE TRAINING PROJECT. THE RSAF WOULD TAKE CARE OF MOST OF ITS OWN MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING THE PRACTICE BOMBS AND 30 MM AMMO USED FOR BOMBING AND GUNNERY PRACTICE. THE RSAF WOULD ALSO BE PREPARED, IF NECESSARY, TO UNDERTAKE LIMITED CONSTRUCTION AND BRING IN VEHICLES, ETC., TO MEET ITS REQUIREMENTS. THESE DETAILS WOULD BE WORKED OUT IN FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS.

4. PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (PAF) REPRESENTED GOP IN DISCUSSIONS WITH RSAF TEAM (FOREIGN OFFICE LAWYER SAT IN CORNER TAKING NOTES) AND STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT MOST APPROPRIATE SITE FOR TRAINING FACILITY WOULD BE CLARK AB. PAF FURTHER INDICATED THAT ALL RSAF A-4 (OR HUNTER) TRAINING, INCLUDING LOW-LEVEL NAVIGATION, SHOULD BE RESTRICTED TO CLARK RESERVATION. PAF ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PERMISSION MIGHT BE GRANTED ON CASE BY CASE BASIS FOR RSAF AIRCRAFT TO USE TABONES, LOS FRAILES AND WILD HORSE CREEK RANGES ON COAST NORTH OF SUBIC NAVAL BASE. PAF PREFERENCE FOR CLARK AS TRAINING SITE APPEARS TO BE BASED ON PAF'S INTENTION TO CONTROL AND MONITOR RSAF ACTIVITY THROUGH PAF TRAINING DETACHMENT ALREADY LOCATED AT CLARK. GOP PLANS EXERCISE CONTROL OVER RSAF FOR CUSTOMS, IMMIGRATION AND CIVIL AND CRIMINAL JURISDICTION.

5. RSAF TEAM CHIEF SAID THAT RESTRICTION ON LOW-LEVEL NAVIGATION WOULD POSE CRITICAL OBSTACLE TO OVERALL TRAINING PROJECT. RSAF TEAM CHIEF EMPHASIZED THAT IF THE GOP WOULD NOT RPT NOT AUTHORIZE THE RSAF USE OF LOW-LEVEL ROUTES FOR NAVIGATIONAL TRAINING - FOR EXAMPLE, THE ROUTES NOW USED BY US AIRCRAFT - THE RSAF TEAM WOULD RECOMMEND TO GOS THAT A-4 TRAINING FACILITY NOT RPT NOT BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PHILIPPINES. PAF TEAM SIAD THAT IT COULD NOT RPT NOT YIELD ON THIS POINT.

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6. RSAF TEAM RETURNED TO SINGAPORE MAY 1 TO DISCUSS RESULTS OF SURVEY AND TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH FORMAL PROPOSAL FOR RSAF TRAINING FACILITY IN THE PHILIPPINES IN LIGHT OF GOP RESTRICTION ON NAVIGATIONAL TRAINING. IF FORMAL GOS PROPOSAL IS PREPARED AND SUBMITTED TO USG AND GOP, WE WOULD EXPECT IT TO INCLUDE MANY OF THE ELEMENTS PROVIDED IN PARAS TWO AND THREE ABOVE. PROPOSAL WOULD ALSO LIKELY INCLUDE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION THAT ALTHOUGH CUBI WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE SITE FOR RSAF A-4 TRAINING, CLARK AB WOULD BE PREFERRED LOCATION, BECAUSE PAF HAS SO RECOMMENDED AND BECAUSE CLARK APPEARS TO OFFER SPACE AND OTHER PHYSICAL ADVANTAGES.

7. COMMENT: WE ADVISED RSAF TEAM UPON ITS DEPARTURE

THAT USG WANTS TO BE HELPFUL ON QUESTION OF A-4 TRAINING
AND THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO GIVE PROMPT ATTENTION TO
WHATEVER SPECIFIC PROPOSAL GOS MAY WISH TO MAKE. PAF
REPRESENTATIVE SAID THAT GOP LOOKS UPON PROPOSED RSAF
A-4 TRAINING PROJECT AS ESSENTIALLY A PROJECT WORKED UP
BETWEEN THE USG AND THE GOS. (THIS APPARENTLY IS THE LINE
THAT SINGAPORE EMBASSY HAS TAKEN WITH THE GOP FOR PAST
SEVERAL WEEKS.) GOP SEEMS PREPARED TO GO ALONG SO LONG
AS ARRANGEMENTS ARE RESTRICTED TO CLARK RESERVATION WHERE
PAF CAN NOT ONLY KEEP AN EYE ON THE PROJECT BUT BEGAIN AS WELL TO
TEST ITS WINGS IN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY WHICH GOP MAY SEEK
TO SECURE FOR US IN GENERAL US-ROP BASE NEGOTIATIONS
SET TO RESUME IN JUNE.
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